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A DEFENCE OF Mr TOLAND, IN A LETTER to Himself.

LONDON,
Printed in the Year M DC XCVII.

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SIR,

I Have not the Honour to know you any other way than by your Writings and Character; but from thence I have entertain'd ſuch an opinion of you, that I thought my ſelf obliged to juſtify you to the World in ſuch things as I judged capable of any defence, and to deſire you to undertake your own vindication, where I found my ſelf at a loſs how to ſerve you.

Some time ago you obliged the World with a Book, Entitled *Chriſtianity not Myſterious*; which I perceive has given abundance of offence here in *England*, and has drawn upon you the cenſure of the *Iriſh Parliament*. I have heard a great many violent things ſaid againſt

this Book by Men of all ranks and conditions, and a great many Pens have been ingaged in Writing it down; but, notwithstanding this mighty dislike, People have generally taken to it, I am very much disposed to believe that, if they had not been too much prejudiced to read it over with due care and attention, and wanted patience to stay for the other parts you promised, they would hardly have conceived such terrible apprehensions of your performance, and consequently would have been more moderate in their resentments.

The chief complaint I have met with is against the *Title* and *Design* of the Book. 'Tis an impudent thing, I am told, for a Man to publish to the World in huge Capital Letters, that *Christianity* is *not Mysterious*, when all Sects and Parties of *Christians*, have agreed to speak of the *Mysteries* of the *Christian Religion*; and a design to prove this seems to give the lye to all the *Fathers* and *Writers* of the whole *Catholick Church*, and to call them a Company of Ignorant Fellows, that did not understand any thing of the Religion they profess.

This is a severe charge indeed, but if you prove your point, I think, a very unjust one; for errours are to be opposed and confuted, be they never so ancient and venerable, and never so well established in the World; nay, the longer they have stood, and the wider they are spread, the more *Heroick* is the Adventurer, who lays his Pen to the root of them, and has the courage to give the first stroke towards their fall: And therefore the main Controversy betwixt you and the two Nations depends entirely upon the proof you have given, of what you undertook to demonstrate to the World. If then it can be shewn that you have made good all you pretended to prove in your Book, you will be in a great measure

measure justifyed, as to the *design* and *substance* of your Work, and we will see what can be said for the *management* of it afterwards.

Now I must needs own, notwithstanding there are so many eminent Names against me, that you have gone a great way towards proving the point you proposed to establish in your Book. *Christianity not Mysterious* is your *Title*, and your profest *Design* is to make it appear that there are *no Mysteries in the Christian Religion*; but then it is to be remembred that this Title belongs to the whole undertaking, which is to consist of three Parts, and 'tis as certain as any Maxim whatsoever that the design cannot be perfected before the conclusion of the Work.

All that you take upon you to do in the first part of your Work, which is out, is to acquaint us with the two different significations of the word *Mystery*; to shew that there are *no Mysteries* in *the Christian Religion* according to one sense of the Word, and to assure us there are none in the other sense of it, with a promise of proving it in the other Parts that are to come; and all this, with submission to better judgments, I humbly conceive you have performed to a tittle.

For, in the first place it must be allowed to be true that the word *Mystery*, does commonly signify either *something which we do not understand, because it is not discovered to us*, or *something that we cannot comprehend, or fully know after it is discovered.*

It is likewise as plain that there can be *no Mysteries in Christianity* in the first signification of the Word; because the whole *Christian Religion* being Revealed to us in the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, and there being no further Discoveries to be expected, it would be very Ab-

ſurd to ſay we do not underſtand any part of the *Chriſtian Religion* upon the account of its not being Reveal'd to us; and therefore for Men who have this Notion of *Myſtery*, to ſay *Chriſtianity is Myſterious*, is as much as to ſay, *Chriſtianity is not Revealed*: which is ſo falſe and unwarrantable a Poſition, and ſo fully proved to be ſo by you, that I hope hereafter, whatever *Jews* or *Deiſts* may ſay, there will be no *Chriſtians* to be found, that will dare to maintain the *Myſteriouſneſs of Chriſtianity* in this Senſe.

But if we conſider *Myſtery* in the other ſenſe of the Word, I muſt confeſs, all the *Chriſtians* I have hitherto had occaſion to Read of, or Converſe with, have thought that there were *Myſteries in the Chriſtian Religion*. Since therefore you appear to be ſomewhat Singular in your Notions upon this Point, if you pleaſe, we will take a more particular account of the *Popular* Opinion before we examine *yours*, that ſo we may be more capable Judges of the difference betwixt them, and of the preſent Controverſie that has occaſioned.

Now the *common* Opinion concerning the *Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion*, as far as I underſtand it, is in ſhort this; That there are a great many things deliver'd to us in the *Scriptures* of the *New Teſtament*, which without *Revelation from God*, we ſhould have known nothing at all of, and which, as they ſtand there Reveal'd to us, we know now but *in part*: Some of them we look upon to be of ſuch a Nature, that we are not able in the preſent ſtate of our Faculties, to conceive beyond ſuch a Degree, and which we expect a further Comprehenſion of in another ſtate of more Perfection, ſuch as are the Doctrines of the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, &c. others there are which are but in part Reveal'd to us, and

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which we are capable of knowing further in this ſtate, if God had been pleaſed to give us a clearer and fuller Diſcovery of them, ſuch as are the *Prophecies* contained in the *Revelations*, and other parts of Scripture.

This is the *Vulgar Faith*, to which *yours* being directly oppos'd, it muſt be this; That there is nothing in Scripture but what is fully diſcovered to us, and what we fully comprehend; that we do not now *ſee through a Glaſs darkly*, but that we perfectly *know, even as we are known*.

This is *your* Opinion, and ſince you have kindly purpoſed and intended to make it ours too, I cannot imagine what reaſon any body ſhould have to Condemn ſo generous a Deſign. For my part, I am not of that proud or invidious Temper to be uneaſie under the Honour you are like to get by ſo Noble an Atchievement, as you are now upon; nor am I concerned who it is that informs me of any thing, when I am to be the better for his Information. If my Author be a good one, 'tis all one to me whether he be *Iriſh*, or whether he be *Greek*, or *Latin*, whether he have a long Beard, or none at all: and therefore, I cannot but think you have been a little hardly uſed, to be treated ill purely for ſuch a deſign, as plainly tends to improve our Underſtandings, and enlarge our Knowledge. If indeed, you ſhould fail in your Attempt, you could not poſſibly expect to ſave your ſelf from a great deal of Scorn and Diſgrace, and I cannot ſay the ſcurvy uſage you would then probably meet with would be altogether unjuſt, for I think People have reaſon to take it ill to be put out of their way, and to be diſturb'd in the peaceable Poſſeſſion of Ancient Opinions, by new Doctrines that cannot make out their claim to be admitted.

But the World has no reaſon to cry out againſt you yet

yet upon this account; for you are not yet come to the proof of your *New Divinity* in that part of your discourse which is already printed; you have only prepared the way and Skirmiſht a little with ſome flying ſuggeſtions in order to lead on the main arguments with more force in the ſecond part, which are to be backt and maintained by a ſtrong reſerve in the third. This is your deſign, and it is yet only a deſign; but you give us ſuch mighty promiſes and aſſurances of bringing this deſign about, that there's no body can juſtly doubt but you are firmly perſwaded of your own ſufficiency to effect it; which is all you undertook to prove in your Book beſides what is before mentioned. And therefore, having made good every thing you took upon you to do as farr as you are gone, I muſt needs ſay, 'tis a prejudging the cauſe to condemn you before the other parts you have promiſed are put out: whereupon I will ſuſpend my judgment of your work till I have it altogether, and will live in expectation of ſeeing all the ſuppoſed *Myſteries* of the *Chriſtian Religion* unlockt, all the dark Prophecies of the New Teſtament unfolded, and all the hard and intricate paſſages of it made eaſy and plain, ſo that all *ſtrife and contention ſhall ceaſe from among us*, there ſhall be *no leading into captivity* by impoſing falſe Notions upon us, *no complaining* any more of the difficulties of Religion. Oh what a glorious Scene will here be, and how happy ſhould I think my ſelf if I ſhould live to ſee the day when the *Revelations* ſhall be as eaſy to be underſtood as any Hiſtory of paſt matters of fact, when the *book with the ſeven ſeals*, ſhall be *opened*, and we ſhall certainly be inform'd of every thing that is in it; when we ſhall have ſuch a clear and intelligible account of the *Trinity* that Dr. *S.* and Dr.

Dr. S. shall agree in; and all the *Unitarians* subscribe to? where a Man may be convicted of *Original Sin* as easily as he can of Murder? and the *Eternal Decrees of God* shall be plainer than *Acts of Parliament*!

I must confess I do not believe any thing of all this can be done, because no body has done any thing like it yet, and because I cannot conceive which way a Man could go to work if he would venture upon such an attempt: But this may be prejudice in me; for I am not to measure another Man's genius by my own, nor to despair of new discoveries which have escaped the greater capacities of our Ancestours: And therefore I don't think I have just ground to find fault with your work till I see it concluded ill; nor to be angry at the rashness of your design, till it is plainly discovered by your miscarriage in it; and, upon the same account I think others to blame who have too warmly and severely condemn'd the main *design* and *substance* of your Book.

In the next place then let us see what can be said in defence of the *Management* and *Conduct* you have observed in this affair. And here you must give me leave to deal freely with you, and let you know that, how much soever I am inclined to the favourable side, I cannot help thinking that there are some particulars, in which you have not taken such just and proper measures as the niceness of your Subject required; but where I want sufficient matter of Defence, or have not the sagacity to find it out; I hope you will take occasion to do your self justice.

There are several passages scattered through your Book, which are not so warily and cautiously expressed as they should have been; some of which have been

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taken notice of to you already in Print, and by the help of thoſe, you might eaſily find out others, which to a curious and exact Reader would furniſh the like matter of exception; and therefore I ſhall not trouble you with any remarks of this kind.

But that which, in my opinion, is the greateſt overſight you have been guilty of, and which I judge you moſt to blame for, is the printing one part of your diſcourſe by it ſelf without the others. For a Paradox ſhould never be aſſerted, but it ſhould be at the ſame time throughly proved, and therefore it was not ſo prudently done of you peremptorily to aſſert that *Chriſtianity* was *not Myſterious*, before you had perfectly confounded the *Myſteriouſneſs* of it by dint of powerful Argument. You might eaſily have foreſeen that the very Title of your Book, would ſhock a great many honeſt Chriſtians, who came with an intention to read it, and very probably to ſuch a degree, that they would not have the patience to go any further: But, if they did overcome their prejudices ſo far as to read it over, 'twas eaſy for you to have imagined what their reſentments would be when they found a bold Title ſtand naked and unſupported by any proof. For to ſet the matter in a ſtronger light; ſuppoſe the Title of ſome Book had been *Chriſtianity an Impoſture*, can it be believed that a *Chriſtian* Nation could have bore ſuch an aſſertion as this, if it had not been irrefragably and unqueſtionably made out in the Book? And would not the Author, think you, have been juſtly cenſured for it? Had I therefore been one of your Friends, that you had been pleaſed to conſult upon this occaſion, it had been my advice to you to publiſh your whole Diſcourſe together, (if I had thought fit to adviſe the publiſhing any of it at all)

all) and to recommend it to the World under a ſofter and more unexceptionable Title; and you ſhould have reſerved all your ſtrong terms and hardy aſſertions till a full and convincing proof of your point had made way for their reception.

There is another miſ-management I have heard objected to you, which I cannot wholly excuſe you for, tho' I dont think it affects the main deſign of your Work ſo much as it is imagined by others to do; and that is the *obſcurity* of your way of Writing. I have often heard it urged as an unpardonable thing for a Man to pretend to go about to prove that there's nothing in Chriſtianity *Myſterious* in a Book where every thing is perplex'd and obſcure, and where common eaſie Notions are deliver'd in ſuch a manner as to be difficultly underſtood; but eſpecially your Notions of *Reaſon*, and *Evidence*, and your account of the *Original* and *Progreſs* of our *Knowledge*, which ſeem to be taken out of a clear Writer, were thought to be ſo confuſed and ſo odly ſorted together in your Book, that it was deem'd impoſſible for you to play your Game well with ſo ill a hand; upon which occaſion it was ſaid, that you muſt go to ſtock again, if you hoped to make any thing of it. And indeed I was not able to deny the charge; I could not help obſerving this fault my ſelf, tho' I was willing to lay it upon my own Underſtanding, till I found my ſelf oblig'd by the general conſent of others to put it to your Account.

However, tho' I have been forced to allow your Book to be obſcure, and in the Phraſe of thoſe that ridicule it, *Myſterious*; yet I do and will maintain to any Man that condemns it upon that account, that this can be no juſt prejudice to the Cauſe you have undertook. For

if you can but certainly prove that *Christianity is not Mysterious*, 'tis no matter how obscure a Style you write in; if in clearing and brightning the dark parts of the Christian Religion, some obscurity should stick to the hand that does it, what Impeachment is that to the Work? Or if you should take all the *Mysteries* out of the Scripture, and put them into your Book, what's that to any body? 'Tis of Importance to have our Religion clear, but not your Book.

And since I have taken this freedom with you, give me leave to put you in mind of another thing, which I cannot tell how to account for; and that is the many Insinuations you have against the *Priests*, as if it was for their Advantage to have *Mysteries* in the *Christian Religion*. Several things of the same Nature I have met with in other Books that have come out of late, and I am puzl'd to know what all the Authors of them mean by their common cry against *Priests*, and laying all the Tricks and Mysteries of Religion at their Doors. I desire next time you write, you will be so kind as to inform me, what good end you propose to your self by a ridiculous Representation of the Order of *Priesthood*; and that, perhaps, may be a Key to let me into the design of those other Writers. I know very well that they are *Heathen*, and *Popish Priests*, that are commonly exposed and insulted in this manner; and I do not deny that a great many of them have deserved such usage; but why they should be made the common Subject of Railery now, in a Country where the *Priests* have freed themselves from the Bondage of *Superstition* and *Religious Craft*, where they have reduc'd Religion to its Primitive Standard, and constantly propose it to the People in the plainest, and most simple Dress; this I say

ſay looks very odd, and ſeems to have ſomething either of *Trick* or *Myſtery* in it. For my part, I never read any one of our *Engliſh Divines* who talks of any *Myſteries*, which upon conſulting the Scriptures, I did not find to be *Myſteries* there as well as in his Book; and they are generally ſo far from making *Chriſtianity* more *Myſterious* than it is, that they are rather guilty of the fault of venturing upon too bold Explications of ſuch things as they are not able to comprehend. But pray what Honour, or Advantage is there to be got by *Myſteries*? Suppoſe the *Arrian*, *Socinian*, or as you are pleas'd to diſtinguiſh the *Unitarian Doctrines*, were received here, would not they bring in as much Profit and Eſteem to the *Arian*, *Socinian*, or *Unitarian Prieſts*, as the *Orthodox Opinions* do to *ours*? I am afraid they would hardly be contented with that ſcanty Proviſion, which Nineparts in Ten of our Clergy ſubſiſt upon. What then can be the meaning of ſo many Jeſts and Reflections upon the *Prieſts*, when there is no preſent apparent likelihood, that *Heatheniſm*, or *Popery* ſhould prevail among us? Such abundance of care and caution as is now uſed for our Safety, and ſuch Zealous Admonitions as are now given us to beware of being trickt and impoſed upon, when there is no manner of Danger to be perceived, looks very impertinent; but I can hardly perſwade my ſelf that you, and ſo many other as conſiderable Writers that have appear'd of late in the Defence of our *Intellectual Liberty*, have perfectly thrown away your time and pains, and been only very impertinent, though I muſt own, I think my ſelf ſometimes obliged in Charity to believe ſo; becauſe I cannot otherwiſe give my ſelf any account of your behaviour, without aſcribing it to ſuch reaſons and motives as I am not willing to

judge you acted upon. Pardon me therefore, I intreat you, that I am rather inclined to make a little bold with your understanding, and to think you impertinent, than to entertain any hard thoughts of your moral Character, which every Man ought to be most tender of.

These are all the Remarks I thought fit to trouble you with, upon your Book Intituled, *Christianity not Mysterious.*

The next thing that appeared in Print, which was said to be yours, was a *Preface* to the *Lady's Religion*; but your Name not being to it, I am not certain it belong'd to you; and upon that account don't think my self obliged to undertake an express Defence of it, but shall content my self with making this one observation upon it, which, if you are the Author, will, I think, in some measure justify you from that untoward consequence, some of our zealous Clergy were apt to draw from your raillery upon the Priests, *viz.* That you was a sworn Enemy to their whole Profession; For by this *Preface*, if it be yours, it is certain that there are some *Priests* who have the honour of your acquaintance, and for whom you have a particular regard and esteem. 'Tis true indeed you are distinguishing in your respect to Men of that Order; and you are very much in the right of it: But if you meet with a Man of an *unprejudic'd emancipated understanding*, who is likewise a person of *strict integrity*, and *purity of behaviour*, and of *chast severe Morals*; you make him your Friend and Companion though a *Priest*, and you allow it to be his proper province to teach *Morality*; and who can blame you for giving a preference to Men of such *flagrant* and *extraordinary Merits*? This

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is ſuch a proof not only of your judgment, but of the ſincerity of your intention in every thing you do, as puts me in mind of an excuſe for thoſe ſevere things you drop now and then againſt the *Prieſts*, which I wanted juſt before, when I was diſcourſing with you upon this head; and that is, that you have dealt thus freely with them in general, in order to excite the emulation of thoſe of a lower form in worth, and bring them up to the ſame pitch and Character with the *Author* of *the Lady's Religion*.

Your late *Apology* for your ſelf, which is the only thing extant that is certainly yours, and remains to be conſidered, is written in ſuch a manner as needs no further Defence. You have there ſufficiently proved that the *Lay-men* are as improper judges of Religion as the *Prieſts*; and that a *Parliament* is altogether as fallible as a *General Council*: You have there likewiſe aſſured the World, that you are not to be over-ruled by cenſures, or convinced by Arguments; that you have as great an acquaintance among the Ladies, as among the Men; and that Dr. *Payne* writ the beſt of any Man that has yet entred the Liſt againſt you.

But, as to the laſt of theſe aſſertions, give me leave to tell you, with the ſame freedom I have all along uſed, that I am not ſo intirely ſatisfied of the truth of this as of the former; and I the rather give way to my diſtruſts, becauſe I am of Opinion it would be a more compleat Juſtification of your Book, to ſay that Dr. *Payne* had as ill ſucceſs in his attempts upon it, as the other Anſwerers had. I muſt needs ſay, I took the *Bp.* of *Worceſter*, Mr. *Norris*, and the *Author of the Occaſional Paper*, to be Men of a ſuperiour Character in Writing; but I allow you to have a peculiar taſt and diſcernment

discernment in the choice of those *Priests* you are pleased to favour with your good Word; and therefore I inquire no further into the reasons and motives of your liking Dr. *Payne*.

All that I have further to observe to you upon your *Apology*, is that you are a little too much concerned for the treatment you have met with in *Ireland*, and too apprehensive of the consequences of it.

Papist, *Impostour*, and *head of a new Sect*, are only terms to flourish with; and you need not fear but the Gentlemen, who have bestowed this angry Rhetorick upon you, when they come to be better acquainted with you, and coolly examine their words by the severe rules of Truth, will change their language, and call in all their false and improper expressions.

When they consider well what laudable pains you have taken to rid your self of the first errours and prejudices of your Education, they may probably be under the temptation to fear, lest in throwing off *Popery*, you might strip a little too far, and not leave your self quite *Religion* enough. And in truth, I can't imagine what ground they could have to suspect you a *Papist* at all, unless it was because you had the peculiar fancy of Printing some part of the *Title* of your Book in *Red Letters*; and in your Opinion of the *Irish* understandings, that was perhaps occasion enough for such a Charge.

But those that call'd you *Impostour*, and compared you to *Mahomet*, had a further reach with them, which I am not able to fathom. However, I dare ingage to them, that they have no reason to fear you upon any such account; for if they will but take care to secure their *Old Religion*, they are in no danger of your imposing

poſing a *New* one upon them; for 'tis your buſineſs to take away and pull down, to mend and contract; and not to lay any new Foundations, where there has been too much Building already.

This no doubt they will quickly be ſenſible of, as ſoon as their firſt tranſports of Zeal have had their due time of aſſuaging; and therefore you need not trouble your ſelf for ſuch a ſtrange undeſerved imputation. Neither, as I think, have you any more occaſion to be concerned for that other aſperſion, of your being mark'd out and deſigned to be the *Ring-leader of a new Sect* of *Religioniſts*, that are to be called after your Name. I know you are not ſuperſtitious, and therefore I need not adviſe you to give little credit to any *Prophecy* of this kind; and for my part, except it had been foretold, and the Prediction confirm'd to me by unqueſtionable ſigns, I cannot believe ſuch a thing will ever come to paſs. What Mr. Recorder *Hancock* ſaid in his ingenious Harangue, muſt not be underſtood rigidly according to the Letter; he had heard of a great many *Hereticks* that ended in ---*iſts* and ---*ians*; and he thought it a pretty ſhort way of expreſſing *all the Gentlemen and Ladies, in and about* Dublin, *that favoured you with their Converſation*, to call them *Tolandiſts*. But this is a liberty that was always allowed to *Oratours*, and therefore you may be ſure of keeping your Name within its juſt dimenſions for the future, notwithſtanding the *Recorder* of *Dublin* did once in a Figurative way, make bold to add a Syllable to it.

Thus, Sir, have I given you my thoughts of your *Writings* in ſhort; I ſhall add one word or two more concerning your *Character*, and then beg your Pardon for the whole trouble together.

I have always been of Opinion, That the *General Character* of a Man is the beſt Interpreter of every thing he ſays and does; and I am very ſorry to find I muſt now be forced to go by a new rule, if I take upon me to judge at all of your end, and intention in Writing what you have already Printed: For upon the beſt information I have been able to get, after a diligent inquiry, I find that the common Opinion of the World, and even that of your particular acquaintance, is ſuch as renders what I am inclined to urge in your Defence perfectly ineffectual. And therefore, I will take this occaſion to acquaint you how the matter ſtands betwixt me and my Friends, when you are the ſubject of diſcourſe, and my charity puts me upon turning up the faireſt ſide of things.

When they talk of *Veracity*, *Breeding*, *Diſcretion*, or any ſuch qualifications as thoſe, I wave the diſpute as being foreign to the purpoſe: But when they tell me you are look'd upon to be a *Deiſt*, or at beſt but a *narrow ſcanty Believer of Revelation*; when they aſſure me that not only the *Prieſts*, and ſome of the bigotted People that are rid by them, have this Opinion of you, but that the *Deiſts* themſelves take you to be in their intereſts; that the *Libertines* are fond of you, and careſs you as one of their Party againſt all *eſtabliſht forms of Religion*; and that this cannot be only an artifice of theirs to make their ſtrength appear more formidable, becauſe you have ſaid ſuch things in their Company as give them ſufficient reaſons to believe you of their Sentiments: When I am preſſed hard with ſuch accounts as theſe, my Anſwer is, That 'tis very difficult for me to conceive how any Man, that owns the leaſt tittle of *Natural Religion*, can publickly and ſolemnly profeſs to the

the World that he is firmly perſwaded of the Truth of the *Chriſtian Religion*, and the *Scriptures*, when at the ſame time he does not really and ſincerely believe any thing of them; and therefore ſince you have made ſuch a profeſſion as this, I think my ſelf obliged to believe you ſo far, and upon that account, I ſhould chuſe rather to ſuppoſe that your intimate converſation with *Deiſts* and *Libertines*, and your ſeeming compliance with ſome of their opinions was by a miſtaken policy carried on, and continued with a deſign of winning them over to the *Chriſtian Faith*; this, I tell them, I had much rather imagine, than make your behaviour an Argument for calling your own *Chriſtianity* in queſtion: But with ſome ſeeming contempt of my Supine Charity, they anſwer me, that ſince I muſt be forced to call you *Fool* or *Deiſt*, they believe you would be beſt pleaſed with the latter Title; and they wonder I ſhould be ſo unacquainted with the methods, uſed by the Enemies of our Religion, as not to know it is an uſual Artifice with them to write booty, and to cover themſelves with the profeſſion of Religion, in order to undermine it more ſecurely, and give their impiety an eaſier vent; for the truth of which obſervation they quote Mr. *Blount*, who in *the Oracles of Reaſon* plainly owns himſelf a *Deiſt*, and yet when he publiſhed his *Philoſtratus*, he would have pretended to take it very ill, if you had ſaid he was not in earneſt in all the encomiums he there beſtows upon the *Chriſtian Religion*, and *his Bleſſed Saviour*; though at the ſame time it was his deſign to have you believe him not in earneſt. Something I remember I ſaid to this, but you being the beſt judge of your own intention, and the neceſſity of your own vindication in this matter, I ſhall leave the further reply to you.

Excuse me, Sir, for having detained you thus long with a *Defence*, which perhaps you may not very well like, though never so well meant: But I thought I could not doe you such impartial justice to the World, if I had shewed my self so blind and passionate a Friend, as to over-look all faults, and justify every thing with the same degree of Zeal. I am afraid my particular conduct in this matter, so different from the usual behaviour of those who ingage in the service of a Friend, or a cause, may give occasion to some to suspect that instead of defending you, I have been exposing you all this while to your Adversaries; and the same nice jealousy you know some people have entertained of several that have seemingly writ in the *Defence of Religion*; but I can assure them that their suspicions are as ill-grounded here as there.

To be serious and plain with you, I have made as good a *Defence* for you as I could for my life; and though, I think at present, 'tis as good as the subject will bear, yet I heartily wish you may make a better for your self; in expectation of which I profess my self

Sir,

Your most humble Servant.

FINIS.